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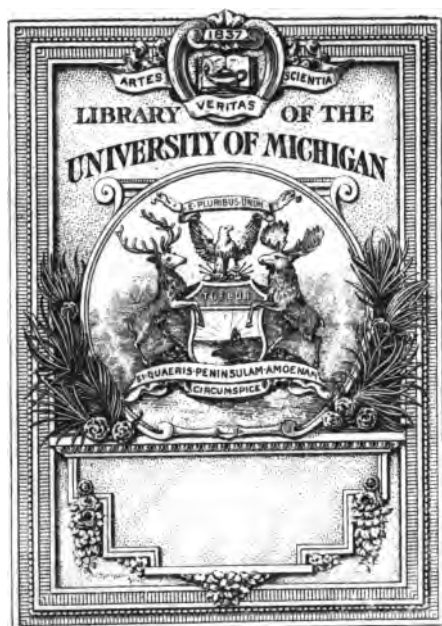
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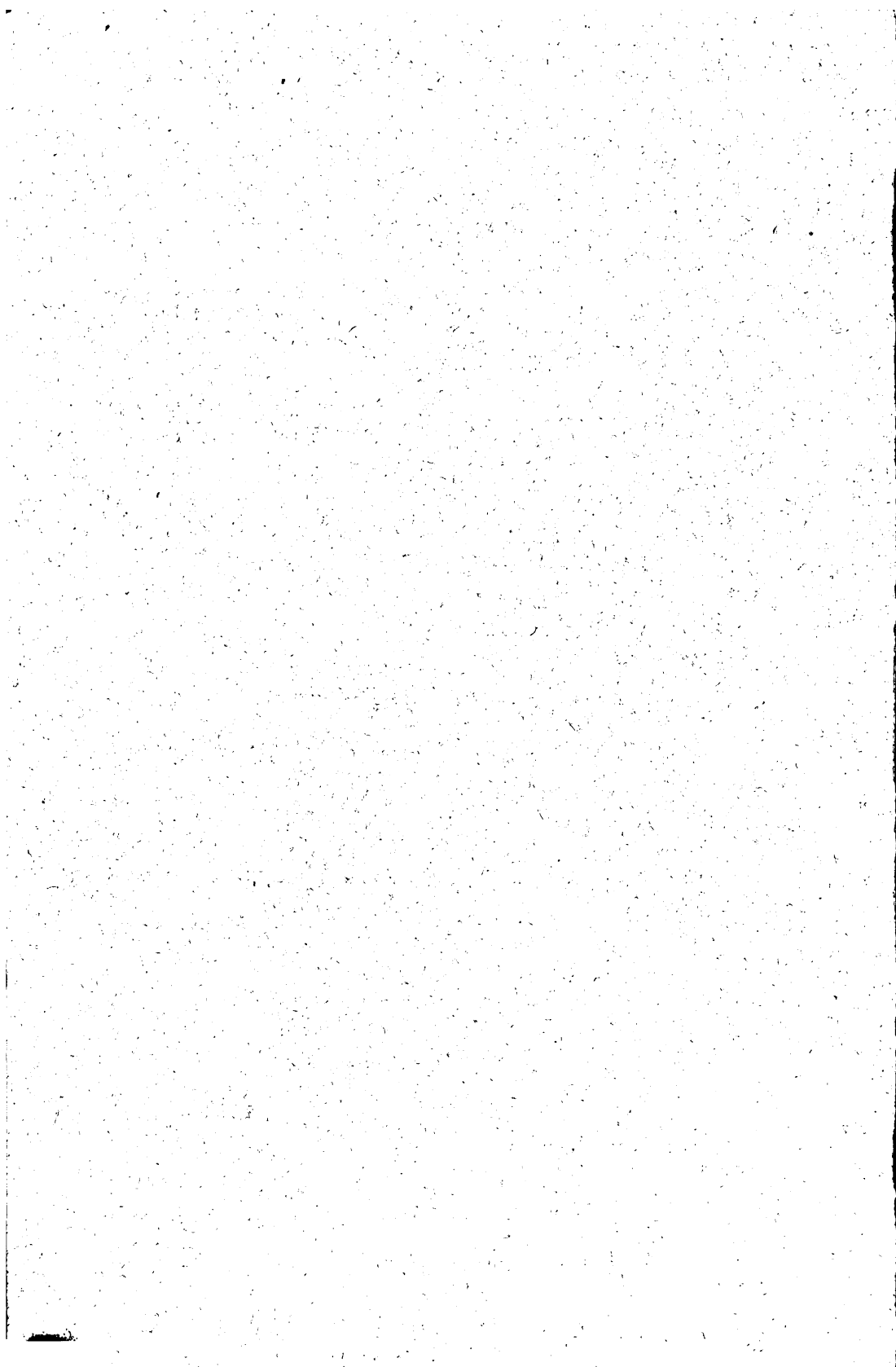
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THE LOGICAL BASIS

OF THE

HIGH POTENCY QUESTION.

"Experience is fallacious, and judgment difficult."—HIPPOCRATES, APH. I.

"Curæ, opprobrium medicorum."—FIGULUS.

ABSTRACT OF A PAPER READ BEFORE

THE MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE,

BY

SAMUEL POTTER, M.D.,

APRIL, 1879.

[REPRINTED FROM THE HAHNEMANNIAN MONTHLY OF JUNE, 1879.]

ADDITIONS AND ERRATA.

Page 11; — Insert the following in the table entitled "Hahnemann's Posological Record."

- 1832 77 Mentioned "once having prepared" the 90th of Sulphur, and using it once in one case of "rare epileptic attacks;" not claiming a cure.
- 1833 78 Said of the 60th, 150th, and 300th, that their action is of shorter duration than that of the 30th, "which is generally sufficient." Prescribed for himself "two olfactions" Coff. 30th first, and then Calc.
- 1838 83 Mentioned the 50th approvingly.
- 1841 86 Wrote to Dr Lehmann, his pharmacist, for the 3rd triturations of several drugs.
- 1843 88 Reported two cases to Bonninghausen, in which he mentions having used Bell. 30, Hyos. 30, Sulph. 2, Merc. viv. 2, Ac. nit. (by olfaction of one globule in oz. j of alcohol.)

Page 13, line 4 from bottom; — for "*never*" read "*scarcely ever*."

Page 22; — Strike out the 2nd foot-note, it being misquoted.

Milwaukee, July, 1879.

Sam'l Potter.

THE LOGICAL BASIS

OF THE

HIGH POTENCY QUESTION.

INTRODUCTORY.—Hippocrates, or some physician contemporary with him, announced the doctrine of similars in medicine twenty-six centuries ago.* Lying almost dormant for two thousand five hundred years, it was revived eighty-three years since (1796) by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, and at once became known to the world by the persecutions which he and his followers suffered at the hands of medical bigots, who, “dressed in a little brief authority,” scorned the formula, denied the facts, expelled the followers of Hippocrates from the temples bearing his name, only to themselves adopt the principle, reduce the dose, and quietly appropriate the vestments of the priests whom they still term† “quacks” and “false prophets.”

The men who ten years ago sneered with Headland, “Who would prescribe *Strychnia* in tetanus,‡ *Opium* in congestion of the brain, or *irritants* in gastrodynia?” are to-day giving these remedies in these very diseases,§ as well as *Aconite* in synochal fever, *Belladonna* in sore throat, scarlatina, and erysipelas, *Arsenic* in skin diseases and cholera, *Ipecac.* in vomiting, *acids* for acidity and *alkalies* for alkalinity, *Cantharis* for chordee and strangury, etc.; are using the homœopathic *trit-*

* Basil, 1538, frob., page 72, line 35.

† Prof. Bartholow's *Materia Medica*. New York, 1878. Art. “*Aconite*.”

‡ Headland “On the Action of Medicines,” chapter ii.

§ Bartholow's *Materia Medica*.

ration in preference to the time-honored pill,* carrying the homœopathic vials and cases, dropping a grain of all but inert powder in half a pint of water, and giving a child a teaspoonful hourly.† Yet they term homœopaths “quacks,”‡ scorn the law of similars, blot Hahnemann’s name from their medical history; and even in progressive America have influenced the United States Commissioner of Education to ignore the nine homœopathic colleges, the numerous homœopathic hospitals and asylums, journals and books, and the six thousand homœopathic physicians, when publishing a memoir in our Centennial year on a Century of American Medicine.§

Why this injustice? Its parallel is not to be found elsewhere in scientific history. The rule has ever been the reverse, and converts to a system have never hesitated to lift up its flag, when such action entailed no danger to life and property. It is a fact known to every intelligent layman that the leading men in the dominant school of medicine do not hesitate to acknowledge their use of similars, small doses, and single remedies. Why do they disclaim the source of their inspiration, repudiate the name of homœopath, and call its professors “quacks?” Why do they not acknowledge the errors of their predecessors, as *they* did of *theirs*, and break down the harmless and futile barriers which still stand nominally between them and us? Why, in a word, does the great body of medicine still reject homœopathy?

Perhaps the cause may be found in our own temple. Have we at its very threshold any fetich which turns away our would-be friends in disgust and dismay? Is there in our system any apple of discord, any debated question, never acknowledged even by a majority of our own school, which threatens our harmony, may be the stumbling-block which bars the progress of our principles towards general adoption, *and without which we would still be homœopathic physicians?*

Such a double-headed idol there is, I believe, whose title, *High Potencies*, conferred in the Duke of Gotha’s stable by the horse-jockey Jenichen, has been the *bête noir* of our scientific minds, and is the fetich which has soiled our banners, the

* H. C. Piffard, M.D., Professor of Dermatology, University School of Medicine, New York.

† Ringer’s Therapeutics. London, 6th edition, page 101.

‡ Prof. Bartholow’s Materia Medica. New York, 1878. Art. “Aconite.”

§ Contributions to the History of Medical Education and Medical Institutions in the United States of America. 1776–1876. Washington. Government Printing Office. 1877. Pages 41, 42.

cloud which dims the brightness of our armor. This monster has two faces: one bearing a physical aspect, reflecting as its main thought the exploded Grecian theory of the infinite divisibility of matter; the other, a flickering treacherous semblance, a spiritual phantom, pointing to a new force, an imponderable something, which cannot be felt, or heard, or seen, but, protean-like, is said to arise by mere agitation, with as many definite shapes as there are drugs to rub it against. This is called the "*Dynamization Theory*," and, like an *ignis fatuus*, it leads us into a veritable slough of despond, a quagmire in which we sink surrounded by the whitened bones of spiritualism, mesmerism, Reichenbach's od-force, miracles, transubstantiation, trinities, vampires, elves, demons, witches, harpies, satyrs, and all the shapes, fair and foul, of man's imagination, fear, or superstition; most of which have had their day, though many are still adhered to. These may be all good therapeutical agents of the psychical class; as well as such potent forces as love, joy, fear, hatred, confidence in the doctor, his own self-assertion; and if Jenichen, Fincke, and Swan had but potentized some of them, and we had them in bottles, labelled to order, in this wise, "Self-conceit of Dr. L——, 200th," "Dogmatism of Dr. H——, 30th," "Blackguardism of Professor J——, 1000th," "Mendacity of Dr. G——, cm.th," etc., we might be enabled to perform some wondrous cures.

But the second feature may be dismissed from consideration, as it is only an excuse, an explanation for the first, and falls necessarily therewith. For, if we can show that there is no trustworthy evidence for the existence of medicinal power in the "high potencies," it will be superfluous to attack the explanation of how such power is developed.

I propose to state the result of my own examination of this question, following the methods of logical science, without which it were vain to expect correct thought or accurate reasoning.

THE LOGICAL REQUIREMENTS.—Inductive logic, "the foundation of all sciences,"* though dating from the Bacons in the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, was not supposed by the most eminent logicians to be capable "of being brought into a scientific form,"† or given rules and systematic arrangement. But John Stuart Mill has so systematized the inductive processes, that we, who believe that through Hahnemann's inductions alone can medicine hope for attainment to the posi-

* John Stuart Mill.

† Archbishop Whately.

tion of a deductive science, may, following Mill's rules, rightly observe facts, estimate evidence, and eliminate the fallacies from which arise the chief dangers in conducting a scientific investigation. The chapter wherein he treats of the laws of complex effects, resulting from a plurality of causes,* is of great value to our inquiry, and so important as a means of education to the observer that I must beg of you its careful perusal. After stating the extreme difficulties inherent in the subject, he takes up a proposition very similar to that we have before us, namely: "Is or is not some particular mendicament (mercury, for instance) a remedy for a given disease?" and proceeds to show the respective degree of applicability of each of the three processes; those of (1) direct observation, and (2) pure experiment, alone, being entirely inapplicable by reason of their characteristic defects, and the impossibility of realizing the necessary logical conditions in the plurality of causes existing in the phenomena of life. By exclusion, then, he comes to the third, or the deductive method, which, he says, "remains to us as the main source of the knowledge we possess, or can acquire, respecting the conditions and laws of the more complex phenomena, and consists of three operations: the first, one of *direct induction*; the second, of *ratiocination*; the third, of *verification*, without which, all the results have little other value than that of conjecture."†

With this eminent authority as our guide our proper course is to form a canon of inquiry, to lay down a standard, to which the evidence offered must conform in some degree to be considered logical.

CANON OF INQUIRY AND EVIDENCE.—I would propose to follow the following order:

(1.) In the present condition of knowledge has the theory the support of probability?

(2.) The original authorities; are they worthy of implicit and unquestioning confidence?

(3.) The witnesses to the facts on which the theory is based; have they been in the main careful, competent, disinterested, impartial observers, who have carefully recorded all the attainable evidence, for and against? and is their evidence trustworthy?

In the examination of the last question it will be competent

* Mill's Logic, book iii, chap. x, secs. 6, 7, 8; chap. xi, sec. 1.

† Sec. 3.

to inquire concerning the evidence adduced, whether it shows, in respect to the facts (cures):

(a.) That the remedial preparation used was actually prepared from the drug after which it is named, and truly represents the attenuation (or potency) stated.

(b.) That the disease cured, or assemblage of symptoms alleviated, actually existed, and was not in process of self-limitation, or cure by some previous treatment.

(c.) That all therapeutic agents used in the treatment are carefully described, with their several effects; whether such agents are physical or psychical, material or spiritual; as for instance, mechanical, topical, dietetic, magnetic, emotional agents.

(d.) That duly considering the results obtained from every such agent used, the medicinal preparation for which the cure is claimed, exercised such a marked and predominating influence, that to it alone can be ascribed the remedial effect.

(e.) That the evidence above described is attested by impartial, trustworthy witnesses, who are skilled in the knowledge of disease and all natural laws; trained, careful observers, having had every possible opportunity to ascertain all the facts in the reported case; having shown every reasonable effort to guard against deception; and with no personal interest, other than a love for the truth, in the settlement of the question.

Of course it is not supposed that in private practice it is possible to obtain in every instance, or even in a majority of cases, such perfect evidence as the above canon requires. It is intended to be a standard of comparison, to which the evidence, to be considered logical, must conform more or less. Should any case fulfil all these requirements, it will have furnished all that the logic of induction demands; but still the two remaining steps of Mill's method would have to be applied, namely, Ratiocination and Verification.

The only objection to this canon, of which I can conceive as coming from an honest mind, is the following: "The efficacy of the thirtieth potency stands on the same evidence as the efficacy of the third; if the evidence is insufficient in the former case, why not in the latter; and must you not logically reject the one as well as the other?"

The reply is simple. If the evidence of physical science as to the presence of drug-matter in both attenuations were the same, the scientific probability (Article I. of our Canon) would be as favorable for one as the other. But in the one case our senses, aided by physical tests, enable us to know that there is

present drug-matter limited in quantity, but still measurable medicine. In the other, no such matter can be found by any means which the accumulated knowledge of centuries has placed in our hands; but, on the contrary, the application of the molecular theory, the basis of present science, affirms that no such matter is present, it having been atomized in the tenth or eleventh dilution. In all matters of *prima facie* improbability, it is our duty to demand the highest degree of evidence attainable, the most careful observation, as much disinterestedness as possible on the part of the witnesses, corroborative testimony, and, above all, the *negative* as well as the positive side of the case.

An illustration will show this more clearly. Suppose that a competent physician asserts that three hours before he had swallowed fifteen minims of Tinct. aconiti rad. without experiencing any of the known pathogenetic effects of Aconite. We should not doubt him, simply because such an experience is not improbable. But, suppose the same witness states that he had swallowed the same quantity of anhydrous Hydrocyanic acid without experiencing any unusual symptoms. To our minds his evidence, though just the same as in the first instance, would wear a very different aspect. The improbability of the fact stated would color every assertion, and the most searching examination would be insisted upon ere we gave in our adherence to the truth of his statement. The degree of probability which a stated fact presents to a certain mind, always determines for that mind the degree and amount of evidence necessary for the establishment of the so-called fact. Hence we will proceed to examine into the *probability* of the existence of medicinal power in, say the thirtieth attenuation, before looking at the evidence presented in its favor.

ITS SCIENTIFIC PROBABILITY.—At this point the advocates of this "fact" usually trot out their subsidiary hypothesis, the dynamization theory, in explanation of how the power is developed. We might, by examination, see that this theory rests wholly on barefaced assumptions, more difficult of demonstration than Euclid's postulates, or the first law of motion. I might show you that it is opposed to all known laws of natural or mental phenomena, is inconsistent with itself, and violates every principle of reason;—but I forbear, inasmuch as it is wholly dependent on the question of the existence of the power, and must remain in the shade until the latter is established.

The high-potency men say, that because matter is declared by science to consist of infinitely minute particles, it is not

improbable that such minute particles of drug have great power on equally minute particles of tissue. This position • assumes the infinite divisibility of matter, its homogeneity, and continuity, a doctrine which, though advocated by Anaxagoras, Des Cartes, and Spinoza, is now abandoned by physicists; its antithesis, the molecular theory of matter, with its resultant, finite divisibility, forming the basis of existing physical science. From the standpoint of science, then, divisibility of complex matter cannot proceed further than the molecule, or atomic assemblage of its constituent elements. If, for example, we divide Quinia to the point where we arrive at its last molecule, it is evident that any further subdivision must rend the molecule asunder, and cause its reversion into 40 atoms of carbon, 24 of hydrogen, 2 of nitrogen, and 4 of oxygen. The three gases escaping, we would then have for further subdivision 40 atoms of carbon, and this attenuation and the next higher should be properly labelled *Carbo*, not *Quinia*.

The question then is, at what degree of Hahnemannian attenuation is the last molecule of complex drug-matter reached? The molecule is no longer a metaphysical abstraction, but as real as the stars, and equally capable of measurement. Its size is placed within the extremes of the $\frac{1}{25000000000}$ th, and the $\frac{1}{30000000000}$ th of an inch by Sir William Thomson and Professor Maxwell, the leading physicists of the day. With the smallest of these as the basis of a calculation which any one may make for himself, it will be found, to quote Dr. Lewis Sherman, in the *Homœopathist* for May, 1878, that "the number of molecules in a troy ounce of metallic mercury, in the ordinary liquid state, would be 85,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. A fluid ounce of the 10th dilution, if perfectly made, would contain 850 molecules. A fluid ounce of the 11th dilution would contain 8 or 9 molecules. A fluid ounce of the 12th dilution would have one chance in twelve of containing a single molecule; while a fluid ounce of the 30th dilution would have one chance in 12,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, of containing a single lonely molecule of Mercury."

Such then is the verdict of science, from the most favorable view of the case, for no other physical test is applicable as high as this. Chemistry has no power of search beyond the 3d; the microscope cannot detect an object as small as the $\frac{1}{30000000000}$ th of an inch, and therefore is unavailing beyond the 7th; while the spectroscope, the latest triumph of experimental science, has not yet advanced beyond the detection of the $\frac{1}{18000000000}$ th of

a grain of Sodium, about the quantity in a grain of the 5th dilution. The theory of molecular magnitudes takes us higher, but stops at the 11th dilution; beyond which it declares that the *probability is against* the existence of drug-matter, and, consequently, of drug-power.

THE AUTHORITY.—We next come to the authority for the theory. Who were the persons responsible for it? What light can be thrown upon their environment which may help us to intelligently estimate their value as witnesses? and do they merit our implicit confidence, our unqualified contempt, or our kind commiseration? This part of the inquiry needs no other excuse than the saying of Locke: " 'Tis not worth while to be concerned what he says or thinks, who says or thinks only as he is directed by another."

Dr. Dudgeon, in his *Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Homœopathy* (London, 1853), states that when Samuel Hahnemann reannounced the formula of similars as the guiding law of therapeutics he was about forty years of age, and his prescribed doses* were those in ordinary use, which he continued to use until 1798. One year after (1799), without any reason given for the sudden change, we find him prescribing the one-millionth of a grain. The only sidelights we can throw on this rapid descent are (1), the fact that it was contemporaneous with his expulsion from Königs-lutter, at the instance of the persecuting apothecaries; and (2), his own exultant hope, as he advanced higher, that he would "soon be able to dispense with the apothecaries altogether." From 1800 to the announcement of the psora theory, twenty-seven years, Hahnemann had no standard of posology, as will be seen from the following table:

* Grains x of Arnica root daily to children of 4 years of age; grains iij of Veratrum album daily in asthma; grains x of Ledum pal. to a child 6 years old; grains iv once a day in Colicodynia; grains v of Ipecac.; grains iv twice a day of Nux vomica; grain $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sulphate of copper, etc. (Dudgeon, op. cit., page 393.)

HAHNEMANN'S PSOLOGICAL RECORD. (CONDENSED FROM DUDGEON.)

Year.	Age.	EVENTS.	DAILY DOSES.	φ	1st.	2d.	3d.	6th.	9th.	12th.	15th.	16th.	18th.	24th.	30th.
1796	41	Doctrine of Similia announced.	Arn., to children, grs. iv-xiv. Ledum, to children, grs. x. Ver. alb., grs. ii-iv. Nux vom., grs. viij. Opium, gr. ½. Camph., grs. xxx-xl. Cinchona, 3½-3l.												
1797															
1798	43														
1799	44	Driven from Königsutter by the apothecaries.			Bel-l. Opf.		{ Opi. Cham. Bell.		Nux v.				Arf. Hyos.		
1808	53														
1814	59														
1815	60														
1819	64														
1821	66	Driven from Leipsic by the apothecaries.			Bryonia in the same disease with Aur.										
1825	70	First "potential" expression.					Coff.							Acon.	Dig.
to															Thuja.
1827	72	Psora theory announced....	Camph., gr. ⅙.	Gualac. Sars. Euph. Menyan. Calc. acet. Tarax. Verbas.			Ipec. Hp. Sul. Mur. ac. Sulph. Arg. Squill. Calc. acet. Verbas.		Stram. Phos. ac. Caps. Bism. Stan.	Cham. China. Ver. alb. Hys. Aur.	Dig. Led. Asar.		Coloc. Mang. Cicut. Dros. Coloc.	Thuja. Spig. Staph. Mang. Cicut. Dros. Coloc. Spong.	
1828	73	Fixed on the 20th as the proper potency for all remedies, saying "It must stop somewhere, it cannot go on to infinity."													
1835	80	Married his second wife and removed to Paris.													
1840	86	Recommended Thuja 60th. Sulph. 2. Merc. 2.													
1843	89	Death. Pocket case contained remedies from 3d to 30th.													
1851		Statue erected in Leipsic.													

In his old age he fixed on the 30th as the appropriate dilution for every remedy, whereby, he says, "all homœopaths will have the same tools to work with;" but his then "high" posology did not receive the unanimous approval of his contemporaries, as the following arrangement will make manifest:

POSOLGY.

ADOPTED HAHNEMANN'S POSOLOGY.	OPPOSED AND DENOUNCED IT.	HUNG BETWEEN.
<i>Ægidi</i> (afterwards opposed it). <i>Gross</i> —went up and down with every new moon, cured congestions with pellets infected with "blood-power" from his own blood, and had many other delusions. <i>Kammerer</i> , theoretically, says he uses nothing above 6th. <i>Hering</i> advocated isopathy, Jenichenism, curing of bug-bites by a bug potentized to the 30th, eradication of lice by giving to them a dose of louse 30th, etc. <i>Mure</i> , author of deerskin provings, proved lice, potato-rot. <i>Cruzeu</i> , author of the "day-theory" of dose, give the 100th if the disease has lasted 100 days, 200th if 200, etc. <i>Nunes</i> condemned all below the 2000th. <i>Stens</i> . <i>Alumyr</i> .	<i>Ægidi</i> . <i>Hartlaub</i> . <i>Gross</i> . <i>Wolf</i> . <i>Werber</i> . <i>Rummel</i> . <i>Griesslich</i> . <i>Kurtz</i> . <i>Veith</i> . <i>Schmid</i> . <i>Schrön</i> . <i>Elwert</i> . <i>Helbig</i> . <i>Vehsemeyer</i> . <i>Lietzau</i> . <i>Schneider</i> . <i>Müller</i> . <i>Arnold</i> . <i>Watzke</i> . <i>Hartmann</i> . And all the English homœopaths.	<i>Rau</i> . <i>Stapf</i> . <i>Watzke</i> . (Nat. mur., high.) <i>Schüler</i> . (6-12.) <i>Noack</i> . <i>Goullon</i> . <i>Whale</i> . (6-18.) <i>Kampfer</i> . (Grs.—30th.) <i>Koch</i> . <i>Scott</i> . <i>Trinks</i> . (Practiced very low.)

It will be instructive to examine some of the views held by the principal advocates of Hahnemann's 30th in these early years of homœopathy.

Kammerer, *Gross*, and *Hering*, were all isopaths as well as Hahnemannians; Dr. *Hering* being the introducer of this heresy into our school, and *Gross* considering it superior to homœopathy. *Hering* urged the potentization of the fæces of cholera patients, the black vomit of yellow fever, the desquamated skin of scarlatina maligna as remedies for the cure of these diseases; states that a bug potentized to the 30th will cure bug-bites, and that lice and nettles may easily be eradicated from a home by administering to them, respectively, potentized lice and nettle-seeds in the 30th. Dr. *Gross* states as a "fact," that he moistened a globule with his own blood, which was then placed in a vial with 10,000 other globules, and shaken for a quarter of an hour. One of these he placed with 10,000 fresh globules, shaking for an equal time, and with a single dose of this preparation he cured many severe cases of congestion and hæmoptysis. Dr. *Mure* proved the triturated skin

of a deer with the hair on, the skin of the dolphin, a diseased potato, a louse, guano, and many other substances of which the exact nature is unknown. *Dr. Nunez* condemned everything below the 2000th; and *Dr. Cruzent* formulated a rule for the dosage, which has one merit, that of easy remembrance. For every day that the disease has lasted he goes up one degree of potency. For example: ψ is the appropriate strength for a disease less than a day old; the 1st, if it has existed one day; the 100th, if a hundred; if a year, the 365th, and so on *ad libitum*.*

We must now follow Hahnemann up the dynamization ladder. We have seen that his first infinitesimal was used in 1799; two years after he published the first germs of the dynamization theory, only germs, however, as he then relied wholly on the supposed number of points of contact which the attenuated medicine presented to the living fibre, and up to 1810 he always employed the expressions "diminution," "subdivision," "attenuation." His *first potential* utterance is found in an essay dated 1825, contemporaneous with his earliest employment of the 30th and with the seventieth year of his age. After this date he ran up pretty fast, forbidding the carrying of medicines in a liquid state for fear of the dreadful energy which the continued motion would excite in them; varying in the number of succussions permitted, between two and fifty; vouching for the power of a globule of the 30th twenty years old, which had been used by olfaction thousands of times, and claiming that smelling at the 30th was the best way of administering a drug. He began to be somewhat contradictory of himself as he mounted the dizzy height; for instance, he asserts that a grain of soda in an ounce of water, shaken for half an hour, became equal in potency to the 30th, yet, on the other hand, that dilution is essential to the potentizing effect. He rested the whole theory and practice on the necessity for weaker drugs, the lower potencies being too powerful, yet he claimed a vast increase of medicinal power (dynamis) from the process of attenuation and succussion. But withal, he never went higher than the 30th in his practice, and, as we have seen, he expressed his belief† that "the thing must end somewhere, it cannot go on to infinity."

The real inventor of the highest potencies was not a physi-

* Dudgeon, op. cit., is my authority for the above. In his book will be found the references to each writer's utterances.

† Letter to Dr. Schreter.

cian by occupation or education, but only a Sarmatian count, Korsakoff, who ran drugs up to the 1500th by what he called the "infecting" process.. He placed a globule of the 100th in a vial containing one thousand pellets, and shook until they were all "infected."

But a horse jockey* in the stable of the Duke of Gotha, *Jenichen* by name, not Samuel Hahnemann, is the genius to whom we must do reverence, if the high potencies are to be accepted. We do not know much about his process, as, being a charlatan of the first water, he kept it a profound secret, and Dr. Hering, who fell heir to it, has continued to keep the light under a bushel. All we know is that, by his own statement, main strength was his potentizer, for he did not attenuate from his starting-point, but proceeded upward by shakes, ten being equal to one degree of potency, his highest, the 60^m, requiring six hundred thousand shakes. Counting five thousand shakes to the hour, and supposing that he could shake for five hours a day, this would require one hundred and twenty hours or twenty-four days of solid shaking for each drug potentized. *Jenichen* began and ended at the same point, Plumbum;† his first potentizing having been of that metal and his last, also, for a ball from his pistol ended his life, and rid the world of either a fool or a knave.

Bœnninghausen, who, like Korsakoff and *Jenichen*, had received no medical education, *Drs. Gross, Stapf, Rummel, Jahr* and *Hering* followed in the *stahlmeister's* footsteps, all expressing great fear of the possible energy which would be liberated by too much shaking. *Hering*, according to *Dudgeon*, was especially mystical in his ideas, naming the new force of nature "Hahnemannism" (like galvanism, mesmerism, etc.), asserting that one globule of the 30th "infected" the whole air of a room, and that the atmosphere itself, if present in the right proportion, would become a new and powerful potency. *Tietze* believed the force to be electrical. *Rummel* saw the atoms of the 200th potency chasing each other over the slide of a microscope.‡ *Mayrhöfer* saw metallic particles of tin in the 14th, although no lenses have been constructed capable of resolving Nobert's twentieth band, the

* See *Dudgeon's Lectures*, page 353, for a discussion as to the social and professional position of the charlatan whom the self-styled "Hahnemannians" delight to honor.

† *Dudgeon*, page 355.

‡ Air-bubbles in the evaporating alcohol.

lines in which are from $\frac{1}{240000}$ to $\frac{1}{300000}$ of an inch apart. Summarizing, the "authorities" stand thus:

DYNAMIZATION THEORY.

ADOPTED BY.	OPPOSED AND DENOUNCED BY.
<p><i>Korsakoff</i>, a Sarmatian count, "infected" up to the 1500th by mere juxtaposition of a medicated pellet, and shaking.</p> <p><i>Jenichen</i>, a horse-jockey, shook ten times for each degree; went to the 60,000th, requiring 600,000 shakes for each drug; kept his method secret, and finally shot himself.</p> <p><i>Baenninghausen</i> had no medical education.</p> <p><i>Gross</i> (see above), <i>Stapf</i>, <i>Rummel</i>, <i>Jahr</i>, <i>Hering</i>, <i>Joslin</i>.</p> <p><i>Tietze</i> believed the power to be electrical, and the same in every drug. (Rummel changed over.)</p> <p><i>Schubert</i> went back to Zoroaster for his evidence.</p>	<p><i>Ægidi</i>.</p> <p><i>Rummel</i>.</p> <p><i>Griesselich</i>.</p> <p><i>Schron</i>.</p> <p><i>Kretschmar</i>.</p> <p><i>Werber</i>.</p> <p><i>Wolf</i>.</p> <p><i>Fiellitz</i>.</p> <p><i>Schmid</i>.</p> <p><i>Lietzau</i>.</p> <p><i>Kampfer</i>.</p> <p><i>Strecker</i>.</p> <p><i>Schneider</i>.</p> <p><i>Hartmann</i>.</p> <p><i>Vieth</i>.</p> <p><i>Trinks</i>.</p> <p>All the English homœopaths.</p>

In our own times we have the extension of the Jenichen delusion by the "fluxion process" of *Fincke* and *Swan*, who profess, by a method, which they too kept secret as long as possible, to make a 1,000,000th in less time than Jenichen required for a 10th. They also revive the heathen myth, and claim to have potentized THE SUN. *Dr. Rhees*, in the November (1878) *Investigator* throws some light on the source of the power said to be in Swan's mms., which the doctor believes (and strange to say states his reasons for the belief) to be actually lower than Hahnemann's 3d.

To sum up the authorities, we find that of the men of any note among Hahnemann's contemporaneous followers, less than a score approved this theory, of whom the three most active and consistent were not physicians in any sense of the term; two were adherents only in theory; two more recanted; another changed his views on the subject at every new moon; another found his support in ages beyond the domain of history; three more were mere laughing-stocks for the profession; and the American member of the firm is found dealing in all sorts of contraband wares, among which spiritualism, Jenichenism and isopathy are not the least prominent.

The authority then rests wholly on *Hahnemann*, and as tenderly as possible, but still honestly, we must look closely at him who has fathered such a vigorous bantling.

I am conscious that any conclusions which impeach the infallibility of this great man will be considered treason, im-

piety, the sin of sins, by that class of homœopaths who reverently apply to him the Saviour's appellation, and worship every rag of theory or fanciful speculation which in the most remote manner may be traced to his brain. There are two classes of physicians to whom I do not address myself, namely, the extremists on each side. Those who believe that because Samuel Hahnemann rediscovered a neglected natural law, every thought of his mind must be as true as his first great formula; and those who, on the other hand, finding some of his speculations absurd, and many of his assumptions false, would equally condemn the whole of his life-work, are so enslaved by their prejudices that they cannot listen to reason. The audience I would appeal to consists of the men who can revere what is worthy of reverence, and condemn what is deserving of condemnation; who, full of admiration for Hahnemann's indomitable energy, tireless application, and brilliant mind, yet do not esteem him as an inspired, infallible god of medicine; these I would urge to carefully ponder over his life, works, character, habits of thought and expression, ere they join hands with those who would have them implicitly follow his dictum, think as he thought, and speak as he spake on this weighty subject.

We have seen that he was often inconsistent in his theories and statements; if we study his private character, we shall find him to have been enslaved by graver faults, especially as age laid its heavy hand upon him. Profoundly impressed in his youth with the uncertainty of the medicine of his day, of which he saw only its worst features, in middle life he stumbled upon a forgotten method, which could elevate it to the position of a science. Completely devoted to this one idea, he consecrated his life to its development, and henceforth lived and breathed only for homœopathy, which he sought to establish as the foundation of pathology, psychology, ethics, physics, and metaphysics, as well as of therapeutics. Powerful opposition, the vilest abuse, and the most bitter persecution, bringing exile and poverty, only made him more devoted to his gods.

"Untamed his pride, unchecked his course,
From foes and wounds he gathers force."

The natural result is seen in his bigoted intolerance, permitting no discussion of his views, brooking no shade of variation from his precepts. He said, "He who does not walk on exactly the same line with me, who diverges, if it be but the breadth of a straw, to the right or to the left, is an apostate and a

traitor, and with him I will have nothing to do." In his devotion to his system he ignored even the emotions of our common nature, and never forgave one of his most active disciples for saying in the sorrow of a bereaved father, that homœopathy could not cure every ill. Such a spirit was scarcely capable of forming an unbiassed judgment, had it no other failing to still more detract from its judicial quality.

His habit of dogmatic assumption forms even a worse feature of his character. Boldly and blindly he lays down assertion after assertion without the slightest attempt at proof. A few examples from the *Organon* will suffice to prove this. We are told in § 11, that "in sickness the vital force is alone primarily deranged;" that "diseases are produced only by the morbidly disturbed vital force;" (§ 12) "that spiritual power is hid in the inner nature of medicines," and that "homœopathic dynamizations are real awakenings" of this power. And so all the way through his writings, though he never exceeds the following example, which, for pure assumption, is quite a gem: "I dissolved," he says, "a grain of soda in an ounce of water mixed with alcohol in a vial, which was thereby filled two-thirds full, and shook this solution continuously for half an hour, and *this was* in dynamization and energy *equal* to the *thirtieth development of power*."

In one respect his most devoted worshippers cannot but agree that he is wholly incorrect, namely, in his pathology. He classes as "similar" measles and whooping-cough; but as "*dissimilar*," measles and small-pox, which are so similar as to have been for ages looked upon as varieties of the same disease. His psora doctrine of chronic diseases, which cost him, he says, twelve years of continued thought and research, has never been accepted by any respectable number of his followers.

As he grew older his failings grew stronger, and upon the simple base, on which his system began, he piled mountain upon hill, Pelion upon Ossa, of assertions, speculations, and absurdities, until the wonder remains how homœopathy has ever staggered along under the load. Sharp quotes Goethe concerning the Germans, that they "have the gift of rendering the sciences inaccessible," and says, "Certainly Hahnemann possessed the art of making homœopathy unacceptable." Yet the system has made extraordinary progress, and if it could but unload the delusions which poor human nature has imposed on it, and ignorant credulity has clung to, it might be acknowledged as *the science* of medicine.

Hahnemann is not alone in the history of reformers as possessed by absurd aberrations of thought, hallucinations of mental vision. Mahomet, Buddha, Luther, in the religious field, are examples in point; and none better can be found in the scientific world than the illustrious Kepler, that mystic astrologer, whose many vain speculations are forgotten, while his three great laws form the basis of the present science of astronomy. His convictions that the earth was an animal, that the sun, stars, and planets were typical of the Trinity, that a force existed in the sun which impelled all bodies around him, and many other equally absurd ideas, do not, however, injure the value of the truths we owe to him, or of the discoveries he made in astronomy, optics, physics, and geometry. So with the theories and speculations which emanated from the brain of the equally great Hahnemann. If some turn out to be but "chaff, which the wind catcheth and driveth away," the value of the wheat remaining is not lessened. We, who pay due homage only to his great name, should not be surprised to find some of his views to be untenable; were it otherwise, he would not have been a man; he must have been a god!

THE WITNESSES AND THE EVIDENCE.—If the authority fail us, we have yet the "mass of evidence," which we are told has been accumulating from year to year for the potential efficacy of the preparations in question. In the examination of this evidence I must beg my hearers to keep in mind the features of the standard we adopted at the commencement of this inquiry. The most important of the requirements there laid down are those relating to the qualifications of our witnesses. You will agree with me that, if these can be successfully impeached, their evidence will have but little value.

A bitterly partisan witness before a jury on a question of fact carries no conviction with his evidence; and an incompetent, careless lawyer can bring no arguments, no precedents, which will change a previously formed opinion in the mind of a judge. But in any case of disease we have questions both of fact and of reason; matters requiring the most profound knowledge, the most accurate habits, the most highly trained senses, for even their proper observation; and there are necessary a strictly impartial mind, a ripe and educated judgment, carefully trained in correct methods, to properly examine and arrange the facts, or to arrive at a correct induction. Yet in every journal, at every society meeting, we are confronted by

witnesses to these wonderful cures by high potencies, who, often to our personal knowledge, are incapable of observing their own faces in a glass, and of reporting the changes seen on that familiar prospect. Perhaps such a witness has graduated at a medical college after the maximum term of ten months' lectures, having had at his matriculation therein as much education or mental training as can be picked up by the average American boy on the farm, in a store, or on the streets, whence so many of our students come. While in college he has seen on an average one fresh case of disease or injury every day, making 300 in all; of which 200 were venereal and surgical, 50 were phthisical or malarial, according to the climate, and the remainder simple febrile conditions. The only *Materia Medica* he found time for has been, perhaps, a pack of cards, from which he memorized thousands of bewildering symptoms; an assemblage of phantoms, like the shifting sands of the pathless desert, or the countless forms in ocean's bosom, forming myriad combinations to the tortured mind; phantasmagoria of inexpressible difficulty; pictures which, like faces, are never repeated. These numberless effects have been produced, he is told, by *ψs*, 3ds, 12ths, 30ths, etc.; but mark, no differentiation is made between those resulting from the crude drug or from its decillionth attenuation. Probably a characteristic symptom is impressed on his mind by a beastly picture, which for pure filth might vie with the productions which the law excludes from the mails. He is constantly impressed with the personal infallibility of "THE MASTER," taught to regard every word which Hahnemann ever penned as inspired, and every presumptuous doubter thereof as an enemy in disguise, a greater foe than the allopath, and the principal obstacle to the progress of "pure homœopathy." He crams enough during the ten months' lectures to squeeze through his solitary examination of seventy or eighty selected questions; after which, if he has the necessary money, he is clothed with sheepskin, and entitled Doctor of Medicine, Surgery, and Obstetrics; Master of Chemistry, Botany, Anatomy, Physiology, and the Laws of Health and Disease. Is such a man likely to prove a disinterested, careful, skillful observer; such a witness as we would trust to for the collection of important evidence on any question lying near to our interests or dear to our hearts?

But his patient approaches! Her story is soon told; her tongue glanced at, pulse felt; a few such questions are asked as, whether she sweats on the side she lies on, feels a stone in her



heart, or coughs at 4 o'clock in the morning. The doctor's vision is directed into vacancy; before his mind the shadowy hosts of symptoms pass and repass in rapid review. A dim spectre arises from among their indefinite shapes. Slowly he advances, his attitude is listless, dejected; his limbs tremble; his fæces are slender, long, dry, tough, and hard, like a dog's. It is the similitum! His name is Phosphorus! Back into chaos sinks the spectre, the doctor turns to his desk. From a vial of pellets which rival in size the minute mustard seed of the Saviour's parable, he carefully selects *one*, perhaps a Fincke mm. which he places gently on the patient's tongue, gives her a vial of blanks wherewith to amuse herself, and passes to the next case and the next similitum. Perhaps he has given her careful directions about her food, clothing, habits, ordered a series of baths, or the stoppage of some confirmed practice, or profoundly impressed her with the conviction that he has cured hundreds of just such cases as hers,—concerning all of which he makes no mention in his report of the case, or at best a mere hint at what he terms "adjuvants" to the potency. In a week's time, during which he has seen her perhaps once, the patient is better; having had herself rubbed, taken some domestic catnip, or had a good hearty laugh, of which the doctor knows nothing. Another minute pellet moistened with the properties without the presence of Phos., which was oxidized long before it reached his hands; the usual pious fraud Sac. lac., and at the next society meeting, or in the next journal, we are confronted with another proof (!) of the wondrous efficacy of the high potencies; and abused as only physicians can abuse, if we dare to question the reported cure.

The evidence will probably be presented in something like one of the following forms:

(1.) "One case of ague, in an elderly gentleman of fourscore and upwards (after partial suppression by Quinine), was removed by Lycopod.²⁰⁰, one dose. It was of the seven-day sort, "intermittens septiana," and had been a source of annoyance for four or five weeks previous. There were no very prominent indications, but the few constitutional symptoms pointed more strongly to this than to any other remedy."—J. E. W.

(2.) "Mrs. Blank lost all children soon after birth. Had ozæna for a year; under allopathic treatment had grown steadily worse; involved upper lip, which was swollen to three times its normal size, and honeycombed with ulcers. Nitric acid²⁰⁰, one dose, cured in two months."—T. C. D.



(3.) "Was called to see a child, four years old, sick with dysentery, very frequent discharges, small, bloody and slimy, great pain, constant crying and rolling in bed, had been under "old-school" treatment three weeks; gave Merc. cor.²⁰⁰. Twenty-four hours later was so much better it took no more medicine, and was soon well."—A. M. C.

(4.) "Another child, aged about four years, had been sick with dysentery, under old-school treatment five weeks, now getting worse. Pod. was indicated, and the 200th cured in three days."—A. M. C.

(5.) "Girl, aged twelve, had been sick three days with diphtheria. At eight P.M. throat swelling fast, great difficulty in swallowing. *Crotalus hor.*²⁰⁰, two doses one-half hour apart, relieved at once; slept well, and was bright in the morning and the family happy."—A. M. C.

One might suppose that the above were cases carefully picked out from among thousands of others more carefully reported. But not so; they are all from a single issue of the *Investigator* (the 206th), and in the same number will be found under Professor Hoyne's caption, "Kali Carbonicum," over a dozen other cases with the same characteristic features. Not that all the evidence is of this kind, but the great mass of it is, the carefully reported cases being few in number. With the rivalry between journals, nine or ten struggling for existence where two would amply supply the demand, all kinds of such trash as the above find ready admittance to their columns, and in after years form part of the "great mass of evidence" we hear so much about from the high potency advocates.

The principal objection to such evidence as the basis of a logical induction is its one-sidedness, being all affirmative, none negative. Never does an observer come forward, like the true scientist, with his table of successes and failures, by which a scientific comparison might be made. They are all successes, all cures, and of these, if they had any logical value, we have more than enough. But it may be safely maintained that this very superfluity of affirmation defeats its own ends. It proves too much. It carries with it the necessity of believing an impossibility, namely, that all the witnesses were absolutely infallible in diagnosis and treatment, having always administered just the right remedy. If not, there must have been failures. If failures, how many? In what proportion do they stand to the successes? These are natural

and proper questions, but we have no means of solving them; the failures are not recorded.

As to the logical value of such records of cures, we shall find, if we compare them with our standard of evidence, that they are utterly worthless. They simply prove that certain effects followed the administration of certain preparations, but not that the effects were caused by the preparations in question. Their logical use as proofs of drug-efficacy is exactly parallel to the case of a man who should buy an annual ticket, use it every year for a journey to Europe, be always seasick on the trip, and then ascribe the sea-sickness to the ticket. They offer no evidence as to the genuineness of the preparation used;* none, except mere assertion, that the disease existed or was not in process of self-limitation or cure by other agents. No credit is given to the many other means, physical or psychical, material or immaterial (dynamic), which were undoubtedly used, as we know them to be in all cases of professional treatment. No indications, or at most a hint at them, for the selection of the remedy or for the use of a certain potency. Some of the observers cure as well with the 30th, as do others with the 200th, or others still with the 1000th. No rule has ever yet been formulated by any body of men for the selection of the potency, yet we are asked to place this indefinite treatment alongside of the exact rule "*similia similibus curentur*." No reasons are given for ascribing the cure, as is almost always done, solely to the medicinal preparation employed, to the exclusion of all other possible agencies. No information is offered regarding the ability or impartiality of the observer, other than we may find in the language used or the tone employed, and worse than all, no word is said concerning the previous experience of the observer with the same drug in the same complaint, if he ever had any. These are the objections I would offer to the use of such evidence to establish a logical induction, and when I add to them the almost universally patent partisan feeling evinced by the witnesses in their daily utterances and their journalistic attempts,† I feel assured that

* They do not even agree as to the proportion of drug to medium in a certain "potency," nor as to the use or meaning of the terms "dilution," "potency," "attenuation." See the Investigator for 1878, for an animated discussion of these matters by some prominent physicians, some of them professors in colleges.

† A writer in the Investigator of November 1st, 1877, is so completely potentized as to have lost all faith in "The Master," who, because he advocated the medium attenuations, "forever tarnished," says this Hahnemannian, "and paled the glowing brilliancy of a genius."

no truth-loving physician will permit it to influence his treatment of disease or his efforts for the preservation of health.

The logical value of reported cures, unless the strictest possible requirements* are complied with in their observation and recording, is simply nothing. Even when every possible care is taken to eliminate every factor of error, the results are far from encouraging. Cures of disease are on record from all time, and are established on the same evidence as that on which history itself is built. Since the day when Moses is said to have healed the serpent-bitten Israelites isopathically, to that in which Dr. D'Unger cures another form of "snakes," the best class of evidence is attainable for cures of every disease by every method that human ingenuity or rascality can devise. Witness the history of the Weapon Ointment, the Tar-water mania of Bishop Berkeley, the Metallic Tractors, the King's Touch for scrofula or "king's evil." There is no fact in science or history better established *by evidence*, than are the cures of disease by the touch of a king's hand. The Privy Council of the kingdom appointed the day for the miracle, which was announced in all the churches of the realm. Bishops stood around the king, whose household surgeon introduced such as were really afflicted into the presence. A regular service was used on the occasion, which is still to be seen in old prayer-books of the Church of England. The most eminent surgeons of the day acknowledged the efficacy of the touch. Popish or Jacobite bigots, bitter as they were, never denied but steadily affirmed that Protestant kings were thus gifted. Charles the Second touched nearly one hundred thousand persons. King James touched eight hundred on one occasion in Chester Cathedral. William of Orange could only be prevailed on to do so once, saying, as he laid his hand on the patient, "God give you better health and more sense," and the abuse he received from all ranks of society for what was considered a cruel and impious course, is ample proof of the firm hold which, as a question of fact, the superstition had upon the public mind.† Yet with the Tractors, the Tar-water and the Weapon Ointment, it has had its day, and now who can be found to acknowledge his belief in it?

* Such as the methods adopted by the English physicians to ascertain the truth of the claim made concerning the abstinence from all food of the fasting girl, Sarah Jacobs. See Hammond on Fasting Girls, New York, Putnam, 1879.

† See Macaulay, Hist. Eng., chap. xiv; and Macbeth, act iv, scene iii.

THE VERIFICATION.—Having found the scientific probability adverse, the authority untrustworthy, the evidence valueless, and the witnesses mainly biassed and incompetent, there is but one other logical method whereby to still further pursue this investigation, namely, that of verification by experiment—the third step in Mill's deductive method. It is evident that this might be done by using the “high potencies” ourselves upon the sick, and observing the results; and this is the never-failing exhortation of the believers. The objections to this manner of testing have been so often stated that I will but mention the two of greatest logical force, namely, (1) the operation of the law of mental expectancy on the minds of the observers, and (2) the impossibility of controlling the environment of patients in private practice, so as to secure the necessary logical conditions.

A method, however, has been proposed, which is open to none of these objections, and which must give results according to the existence or non-existence of the medicinal power in question. The Milwaukee test, proposed by Dr. Lewis Sherman, and published by the Milwaukee Academy of Medicine, is an *experimentum crucis* which seems to fill every logical requirement. There can be no doubt about the preparations, they being prepared in the presence of the whole society from the purest materials attainable, and then placed in the hands of a layman, who is wholly free from partisanship on this question, and whose personal and professional standing are so high in his vicinage, and in the country at large, that no doubt can rest on his honesty. From him alone the packages pass to the experimenters, he numbering them, and recording the numbers of the medicated vials in every instance. That there may be no question about the ability of the experimenters for the work, they are sought for only among high-potency men, and thereby the door is shut against any charge of cookery or conspiracy. The experimenters being ignorant from which vial to expect the drug-results, can only select the right one by virtue of the drug-power therein contained, if there be such; and we are wholly secured against any false results save only those arising from chance, which the theory of probabilities will eliminate.

The high-potency men have everything to gain and nothing to lose by this experiment *if their theory and facts are true*. The proposition is thoroughly scientific in spirit, and equally logical in arrangement. It can only fail by the refusal of those who profess to believe in the power to aid in its estab-

lishment. But may not this refusal, if general, be an equally potent factor in the decision of the question?

If the believers are satisfied themselves with the evidence, is it any reason why they should decline to assist in satisfying others, to whom the evidence is not so conclusive; or to aid in establishing the theory as a *scientifically verified induction*? Yet such has been the reply of more than one professor of materia medica in a homœopathic medical college to the invitation to join in the test. What would be thought of a teacher of physics, who, when asserting the existence of electrical force, should decline to demonstrate it experimentally to a skeptical member of his class, though offered the battery and acid needed, with the excuse, "it has been proved, it is not necessary to verify it."

Whether the experiment succeeds, or fails for want of experimenters, one valuable result will be attained. The honest believers will be known, and whatever the result, *their* names will stand high in our professional records. But what will be the verdict of the public and the profession on the course of those who decline to verify their loudly-vaunted hypothesis? They may find, between the dilemmas surrounding them, some loophole of escape; such men always have a ready excuse. The question is, will their excuse be accepted? If the experiment proves the truth of the high-potency dogma, what shame will be theirs who refused to aid in its establishment! If the reverse should follow, will *they* not run the danger of being accused of willful fraud? If neither of these conclusions are arrived at, and the question stands as before, they cannot repudiate the charge of self-acknowledged cowardice; and can never more address a college class, or a medical society, or write up a cure for a journal, mentioning the 30th or higher potencies, without blushing at the remembrance of the Milwaukee test.

Meanwhile it shall be our part to see that no one can hereafter plead ignorance of the proposed experiment; but to diligently cry it aloud through the land, and endeavor to reach every medical ear. We must expect abuse, ridicule, and misrepresentation. Such have always accompanied the efforts of honest lovers of truth. But relying on the purity of our motives, the justice of our cause,—ever looking steadily forward to the goal of our desires, the establishment of the truth,—we shall be content; remembering with the great Roman orator,* that "time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature."

* Cicero.

